



CONNECTICUT STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

NEWSLETTER

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Municipal Campaign Finance Filing Pilot Program Set to Begin!

With 2017 approaching, the Commission is very excited to commence the municipal campaign finance filing pilot program under which the Commission will serve as the filing repository for candidates and committees in the following towns for the 2017 election cycle: Cheshire, Colchester, East Haddam, East Haven, Hamden, Killingworth, Manchester, Meriden, Middletown, Monroe, New Britain, New Hartford, Norwich, Pomfret,

Scotland, Simsbury, Stonington, Trumbull, West Hartford, and Westport.

eCRIS will be available to all candidates and committees in these towns for easy reporting. Regardless of whether a candidate or committee files by eCRIS, all filings by candidates and committees in these towns will be available for public viewing through eCRIS.



In this Holiday Season, Best Wishes
from Our SEEC Family to Yours!

CONTACT US
860-256-2940



NEWSLETTER

General Assembly Candidate Committees – Preparing to Terminate and Post-Election Reviews

By now, all 2016 General Assembly candidate committees have been notified whether they were selected for a post-election review. If you were selected, please remember you will need to provide to the Commission, with your January quarterly filing, copies of all documentation related to the committee's transactions since its inception through termination or December 31, 2016, whichever comes first. Committees selected for post-election reviews have until June 30, 2017 to distribute their surplus and to submit a termination statement within seven days, by July 7, 2017. We strongly recommend, however, that you distribute your surplus and terminate earlier than this. We find that committees that wrap up early have an easier time with the process and get their results much earlier. We cannot finalize the actual review until the committee has fully terminated.

Committees not selected for post-election reviews must distribute their surplus by March 31, 2017 and file a termination statement within seven days, no later than April 7, 2017. You too may terminate now or any time before this deadline and must do so within seven days of distributing your surplus.

Keep in mind that regardless of whether you have been selected for a post-election review, committees may only terminate if they have a zero balance and no outstanding expenses incurred.

Thanks for a great election cycle!



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Reminder to Political Committees – The One Person One PAC Rule

The general statutes prohibit an individual from controlling more than one political committee. Controlling a political committee includes serving as its chairperson, treasurer, or deputy treasurer. If you are currently serving in one of these roles for two political committees, you must resign from one position so that you and the political committee are not in violation of the law.

You should also keep this rule in mind in the future, particularly during this upcoming municipal election year where a slate committee

funding two or more municipal candidates – a type of political committee – is looking for a chairperson or treasurer to serve.

Please note that this rule does not apply to candidate committees, party committees, and legislative leadership or caucus committees, so if you are currently a political committee chair, treasurer, or deputy treasurer, you may take on a similar role in a candidate committee, legislative leadership or caucus committee, town committee, or state central committee as well.



Staff Spotlights

Staff Attorney Kevin Ahern served on the Program Committee for the 2016 Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) Conference that was held earlier this month. Kevin developed a seminar on preparing cases and preserving evidence on which he served as a panelist, a seminar on so-called "convenience voting" measures, and a plenary discussion by Kevin Kennedy, the former Executive Director of the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board entitled "A View to a Kill: The Demise of the Wisconsin GAB". Attorney Ahern recently accepted reappointment to the Program Committee for the 2017 COGEL Conference.

We recognize and thank the following staff members for their years of state service:

Staff Attorney
William Smith – 20 years

Information Technology
Analyst
Renata Rydzewski – 15 years

Staff Attorney
Marianne Sadowski – 10 years

NEWSLETTER

SEEC is First State Agency to Begin Installation and Operation of Disaster Recovery Server

The State Elections Enforcement Commission is the first state agency in Connecticut to begin the installation and operation of a disaster recovery server, which is located at the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Data Center in Springfield, Massachusetts. As part of its overall strategy to ensure that the Commission's customer data is preserved and available in the event of a disaster, Commission staff has installed and made operational an array of virtual servers to support all of its customer-facing applications, such as eCRIS.



"Our goal is to have 24-hour a day functionality for all of the applications that the public uses and relies on - this is a step in the right direction to ensure that happens," said Douglas Frost, SEEC's Information Technology Manager.

eCRIS Introduces New Account Creation Process

Several months ago, Commission staff completely rewrote the process for new users to create their eCRIS accounts and associate themselves with their committees. Our goals were threefold:

- 1) simplify the process;
- 2) replace the mailing of PINs with emailing of PINs where possible; and
- 3) create a clean, modern user experience on both desktop computers as well as mobile devices.

The feedback we have received has been very exciting. Most new accounts created since our update have been done without any need of assistance from staff and without people having to wait to have their PIN mailed to them.





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Paper Filers – Convert to eCRIS!

Reminder to all committees who are still filing by paper – the deadline to convert to eCRIS is fast approaching. By July 1, 2017, you must be ready to file by eCRIS unless you fall under one of the limited exceptions or demonstrate good cause for not being able to comply with this requirement.

Please visit our eCRIS homepage to sign up and/or contact Elections Officer Sarah Clark at seec@ct.gov (noting eCRIS training in the subject line) or 860-256-2985 for one-on-one training. Training videos will also be available on the eCRIS home page in January.

eCRIS Enhancements and Beyond

As a result of a constituent request, we have added a “committee subtype” field on eCRIS search so now if you want to search for certain types of committees – such as business entity political committees or legislative leadership committees – you can do so by selecting the proper radio button. We made a number of minor changes to eCRIS as well this past quarter based on constituent suggestions, including increasing character limits in certain fields and fixing aggregates so they were properly working in all instances.

Have a suggestion for how we can improve eCRIS or our website? Please let us know!

Reminder about Written Agreements

If your committee has any written agreements with committee workers or consultants that does not specify a fee for the services provided but states that the fee will be determined on a “per project” basis, you must have follow-up documentation, signed ahead of the project performance, showing the fees negotiated per project.





NEWSLETTER

SEEC Sees Decrease in Late Filers in 2016

Over the past year, staff members have made a big push to improve the filing reminder system so that it is more frequent while staying cost-effective. By moving away from mailed paper notices in favor of email notices, staff was able to save the agency significant funds in postage and staff time while increasing the rate of reminders – offering not just pre-filing period reminders but mid-filing period reminders and in some instances end-of-filing period reminders as well. This improved system, coupled with the rise in eCRIS usage by committees (a 13% increase since 2015), has contributed to a significant increase in the number of committees filing on time. For example, in 2014, the last state election cycle, only 68% of committees timely filed the 7th day preceding election filing. In 2016, for the 7th day preceding election filing, this number rose to 89%. Kudos to our Disclosure, Compliance, and IT staff, as well as treasurers!



CONTACT US

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